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Alphabets Numerals and Devices of the Middle Ages

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Alphabets Numerals and Devices of the Middle Ages

By Henry Shaw F.S.A.

London Bernard Quaritch
1845

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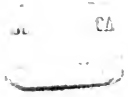

PRINTED BY C. WHITTINGHAM, CHISWICK PRESS.

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IN offering to the public a series of examples of the Alphabets, Numerals, and Devices in use during the Middle Ages, I feel that any elaborate Essay on their various styles and characters is totally unnecessary. They form but subordinate parts in a decorative Design, and being intended for the use of persons presumed to be acquainted with the chronology of mediæval art, and the general peculiarities belonging to each particular period, a careful inspection will be sufficient to shew their accordance with coæval specimens of ornament applied to other purposes.

To Architects, and the various classes of Decorators engaged, either in restoring the noble specimens of Ancient Art still remaining to us, or, in composing new ones, adapted to present requirements, in the spirit, and with the characteristics of those master-pieces of science and taste, it must be needless to point out how essential it is to the perfection of a design, that all its details should be in harmony with each other, or how necessary an intimate acquaintance with every branch of decorative art in use at the same time must be for the attainment of that harmony. I therefore trust, that the present series, selected with considerable care, engraved in various styles, and coloured where necessary, to imitate the originals, may prove extensively useful; not only for professional purposes, but also as a text-book for the amateur and collector, by which he may be assisted in ascertaining the date of

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any specimen of mediæval decoration he may take an interest in, and also be better qualified to criticize and appreciate modern efforts in imitation of the various styles of Christian Art in use between the Saxon period and the Reformation.

The examples have been taken from Carvings in wood and stone, from Illuminations, from Monumental Brasses, and from early Prints, and printed Books; and shew, in their various treatment, the great skill with which the Artists applied similar forms to different materials in a manner calculated to produce the greatest effect.

HENRY SHAW.

37 Southampton Row,
Nov. 1, 1845.

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LIST OF PLATES

TO ALPHABETS, NUMERALS, AND DEVICES OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

TITLE-PAGE. VIGNETTE OF THE ARMS OF ARCHBISHOP PARKER, FROM THE BISHOP'S BIBLE, 1572.

PLATE

1. FROM A COPY OF ST. CUTHBERT'S GOSPEL IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM, COMMONLY CALLED THE DURHAM BOOK; written and illuminated by Eadfrith, Bishop of Lindisfarn, between the years 698 and 721.

   All the varieties of the different Capital Letters to be found in the Volume are shown on the Plate, together with the diapering by which the larger ones are surrounded.

2. FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM, ROYAL MS. I. E. VII.

   A fine, but mutilated, copy of the Gospels, in folio. The leaves containing the figures of the Evangelists, and the titles, written in silver and gold, are on purple vellum. The rest of the volume is in uncial characters, arranged in double columns. It is most probably of the 9th century, and certainly not later than the 10th. The border is taken from the Durham Book mentioned above.

3. FROM THE TOMB OF GUNDREDA, SISTER OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR, in Southover Church, Lewes.

4, 5. FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM, ROYAL MS. I. C. VII. AND OTHER MSS. OF THE SAME DATE.

   A variety of Large and Small Capital Letters from various MSS. of the 12th century. The peculiar character of these Letters seem to shew a more close approximation to Greek or Roman ornament, in their elegance and simplicity, than any in use during the Middle Ages.

6. LETTERS IN BRONZE, FROM THE MONUMENT OF HENRY III. IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY. Date about 1272.

7. FROM THE BRASS EFFIGY OF ADAM DE WALSOKNE, in St. Margaret's Church, Lynn Regis, Norfolk. Date 1349.

8. AN ALPHABET FROM A MS. OF BOETIUS'S DE CONSOLATIONE PHILOSOPHIÆ, date 1385, in the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow, and THREE LETTERS FROM THE ROYAL MS. 6. E. IX. in the British Museum.

9, 10. CAPITAL, AND SMALL ALPHABETS, WITH STOPS, GROTESQUES, &c. IN BRONZE, FROM THE MONUMENT OF RICHARD II. and others of about the same date, in Westminster Abbey.

11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. CAPITAL LETTERS FROM A VERY SPLENDID COPY ON VELLUM OF THE FIRST EDITION OF THE BIBLE, printed by Fust and Schœffer, in the British Museum. Date 1462.

17, 18. FROM LANSDOWNE MS. 451, IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM. A PONTIFICALE AD USUM ECCLESIÆ ANGLICANÆ.

   Among many other curious Forms and Ceremonies contained in this Book, the following seem deserving of notice, and may be found useful in many respects, and particularly to designers of Ecclesiastical Subjects.

   The Manner and Ceremony of Ecclesiastical Tonsure.

   On the Colours of Ecclesiastical Vestments, and why used on particular occasions, fol. 14.

   The Consecration of Bishops according to the Roman Form, fol. 35.

   The Consecration and Installation according to the English Form, fol. 41.

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The Consecration of Nuns, fol. 59.
The Form of making a Recluse, fol. 62 b.
The Form of the Coronation of the Kings of England, fol. 96. b.
The Form of Dedicating and Blessing Churches, fol. 111.
Benediction of the new Episcopal Seal, fol. 172.
Benediction of Bells, fol. 176.
Benediction of a New Well, fol. 193.
Benediction of a New House, fol. 193.
Order of Espousals, with the Blessing of the Nuptial Bed, fol. 229.

19. From a Missal in the possession of the Rev. W. Maskell. Date, about 1470.

20, 21. From Summa Barthomæi Pisani Ord. Prædic. de Casibus Conscientiæ. Date, about 1472.

22, 23. From a Pontificale of John II. Archbishop of Treves. Date, about 1480.

24. From a MS. at Rouen, and from a Benedictionale in the possession of the Rev. W. Maskell. Date, about 1480.

25. From an Italian MS. in the Public Library at Boulogne. Date, about 1480.

26, 27. From a Volume entitled, Preservation of Body, Soul, Honour, and Goods. Printed at Nurenburgh. Date, 1489. And from a Gateway in Chancery Lane. Date, 1518.

28, 29. From the Stalls of St. George's Chapel, Windsor. Date, the end of the 15th Century.

30. From the Golden Bible. Printed at Augsburg. Date, the end of the 15th Century.

These Letters have evidently been copied from an Illuminated Series, and have but a meagre effect in outline, though displaying considerable taste and elegance of arrangement, and would if skilfully and appropriately picked in with colours and gold be very effective.

31. The Sacred Monogram, from an Engraving on Wood. Date, the beginning of the 16th Century.

32. From various MSS. in the British Museum. Date, the beginning of the 16th Century.

33, 34. From a Copy of the Romaunt of the Rose. Date, the beginning of the 16th Century.

35. From Woodcuts in various printed Books. Date, the beginning of the 16th Century.

36. From the Missale Trajectense. Date, 1515.

37. From the Missale Trajectense, and Alphabets of the end of the 15th Century.

38. From an Engraving on Wood. Date, the beginning of the 16th Century.

39. From the Romance of Launcelot du Lac, from Luis de Escobar, Las Quatro Cientas del Almirante, and the Missale Eboracensis Ecclesiæ. Dates, 1515, 1550, and 1516.

40. From the Hystoire de Perceval le Galloys. Date, 1530.

41. From Cranmer's Bible. Date, 1539.

42, 43. Riband Letters, from a Volume entitled Orthographia practica, 4to. Carag. 1548.

44. Sacred Monogram, from the same Book.

45. Sacred Monogram, and Badges of the Apostles, from a Volume entitled Francisci Nigri de Arte Scribendi, Daventriæ, 1495, and a Letter M from a printed Book.

46, 47. Labels from early German Prints.

48. From a MS. in the possession of P. A. Hanrott, Esq. and various Numerals.

The Series taken from the British Museum, Cotton MS. A. II. written during the latter half of the 13th Century, is supposed to be the earliest example of Arabic Numerals existing in this country. They have been found in Spanish MSS. of the 12th Century.

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Date the beginning of the 8th Century.

FROM A COPY OF ST. CUTHBERT'S GOSPELS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

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Date, the 10th Century

FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM ROYAL MS. I. E VI.

Digitized by Google

Date, 1085.

FROM THE TOMB OF GUNDREDA, SISTER OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR,
in Southover Church, Lewes.

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Date the 12th Century.

FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM.
Royal MS. I. C. VII. and others of the same date.

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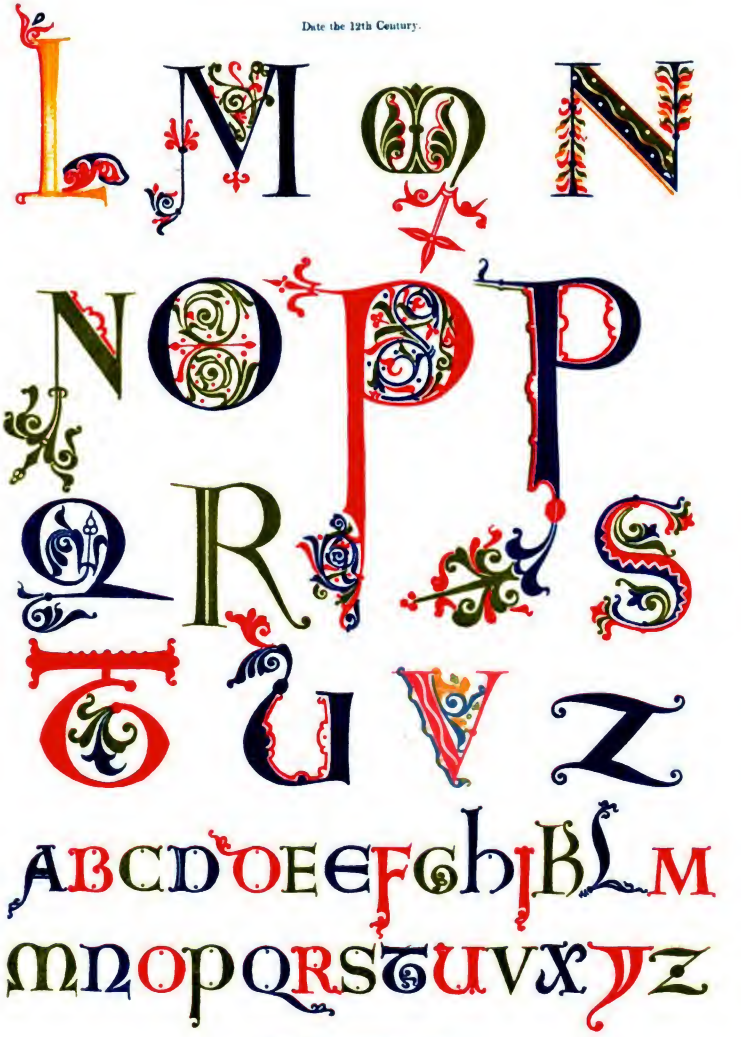
Date the 12th Century.



FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM.
Royal MS. I. C. VII. and others of the same date.

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A B C D E

F G H I K

L M N O P

Q R S T V

W X Y Z

✦ ADAM ✦ DE ✦ WALSORNE ✦

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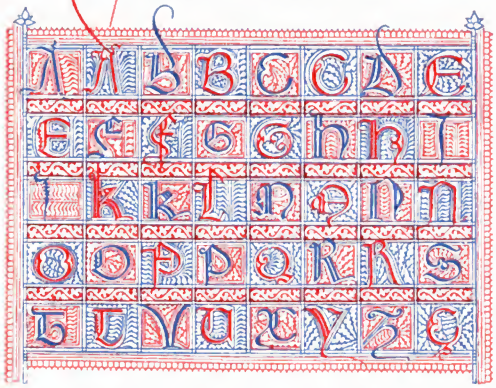
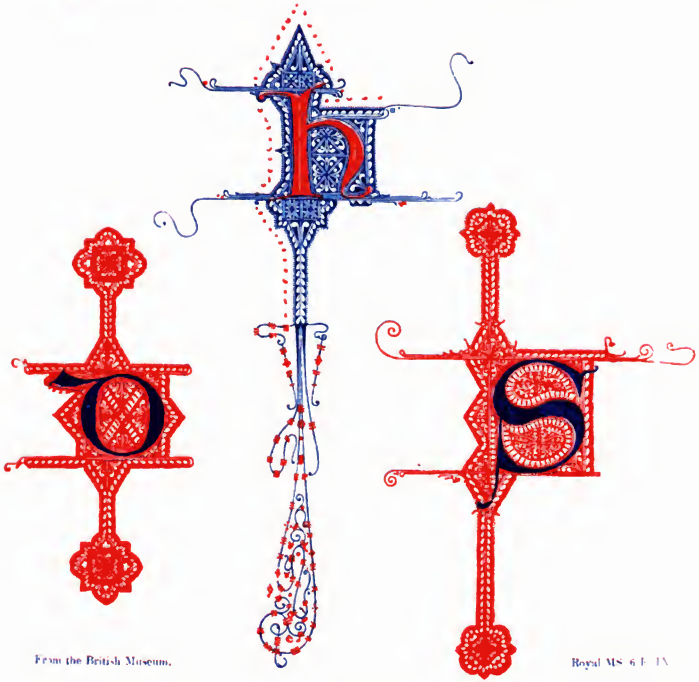
Date 1385.

From a MS. in the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow





From the British Museum.

Royal MS. 6 E. IX.

Date about 1330

Digitized by Google

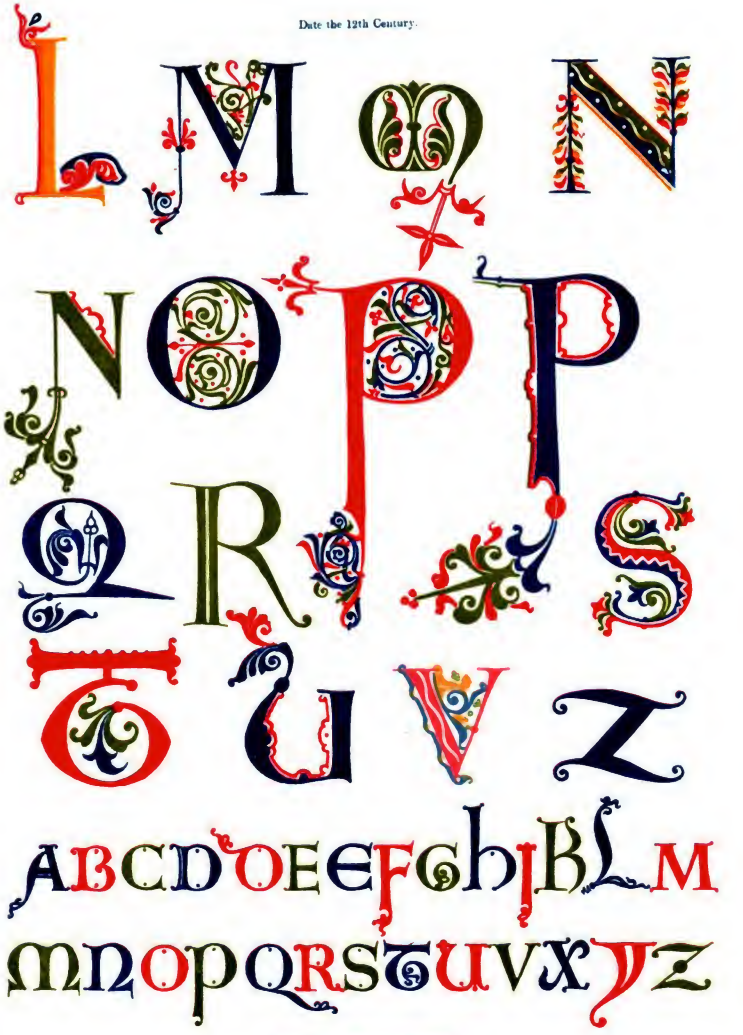
Date the 12th Century.

FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM.
Royal MS. I. C. VII. and others of the same date.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Date the 12th Century.



FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM.
Royal MS. I. C. VII. and others of the same date.

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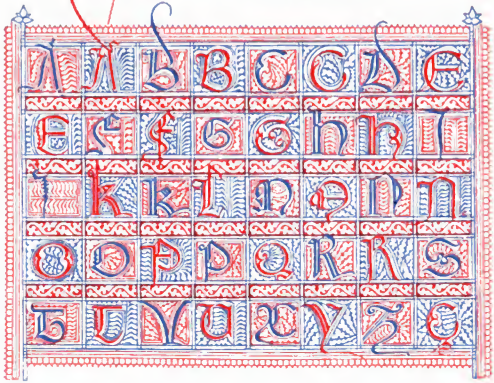
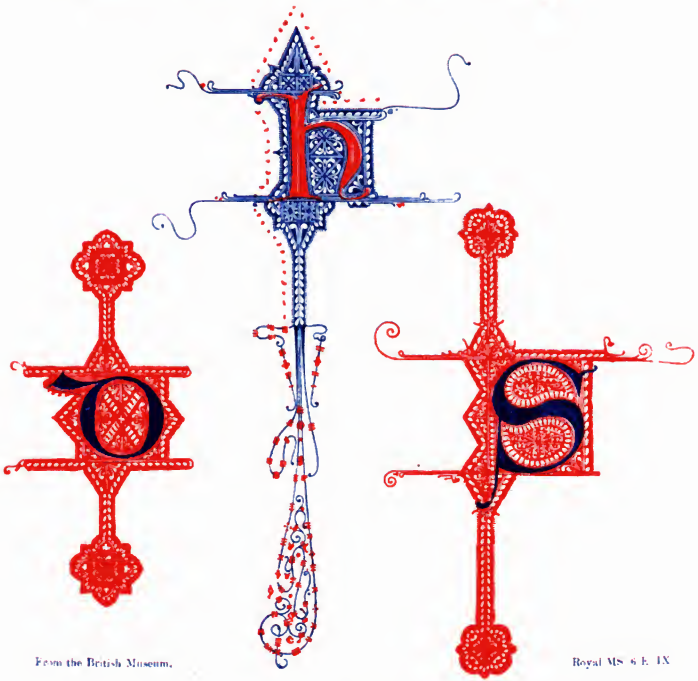
Date 1385.

From a MS. in the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow





From the British Museum.

Royal MS. 6 E. IX.

Date about 1340

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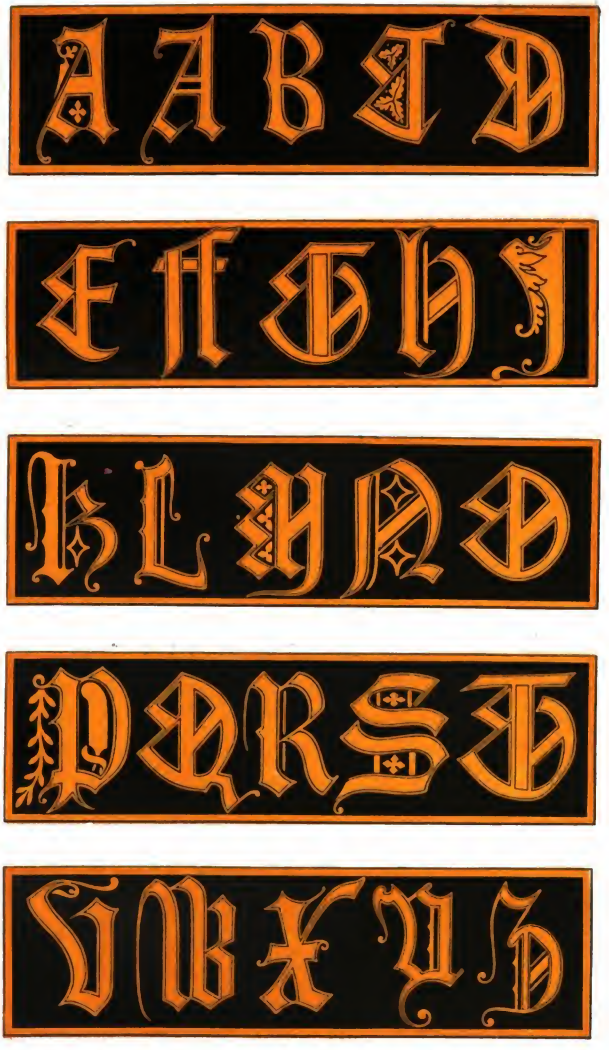

FROM THE MONUMENT OF RICHARD II. IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY, AND OTHERS OF THE SAME DATE.

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Date, about 1400.

FROM THE MONUMENT OF RICHARD II. AND OTHERS ABOUT THE SAME DATE, IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

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FROM FUST AND SCHOEFFER'S BIBLE.

In the British Museum.

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FROM FUST AND SCHOEFFER'S BIBLE.

In the British Museum

Digitized by Google

FROM FUST AND SCHOEFFER'S BIBLE.
In the British Museum

Digitized by Google

Date 1457

FROM FUST AND SCHOEFFERS BIBLE.

In the British Museum

Digitized by Google

Date 1462

FROM FUST AND SCHOEFFER'S BIBLE.

In the British Museum.

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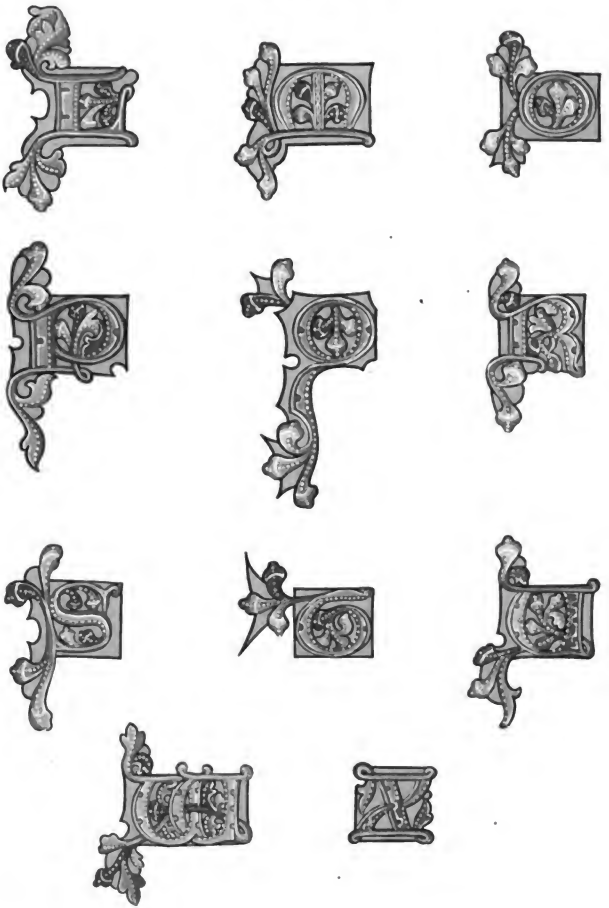
FROM FUST AND SCHOEFFERS BIBLE
In the British Museum

Digitized by Google

Date about 1470.



FROM LANSDOWNE MS. 451. IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

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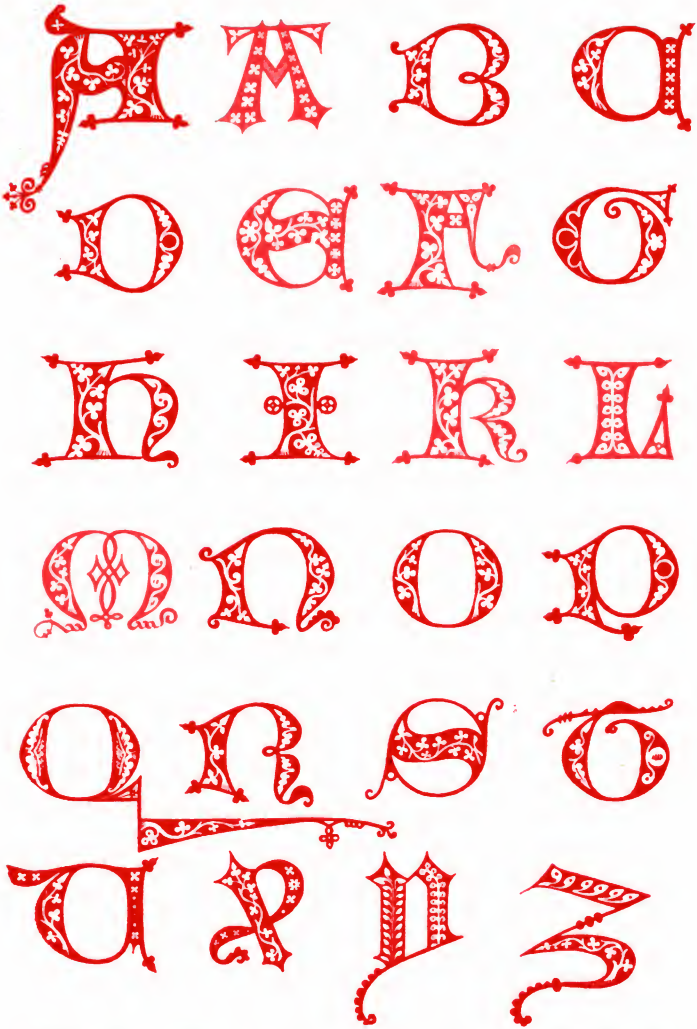
Date about 1475.



FROM SUMMA BARTHOLOMÆI PISANI ORD. PRÆDIC. DE CASIBUS CONSCIENTIÆ.

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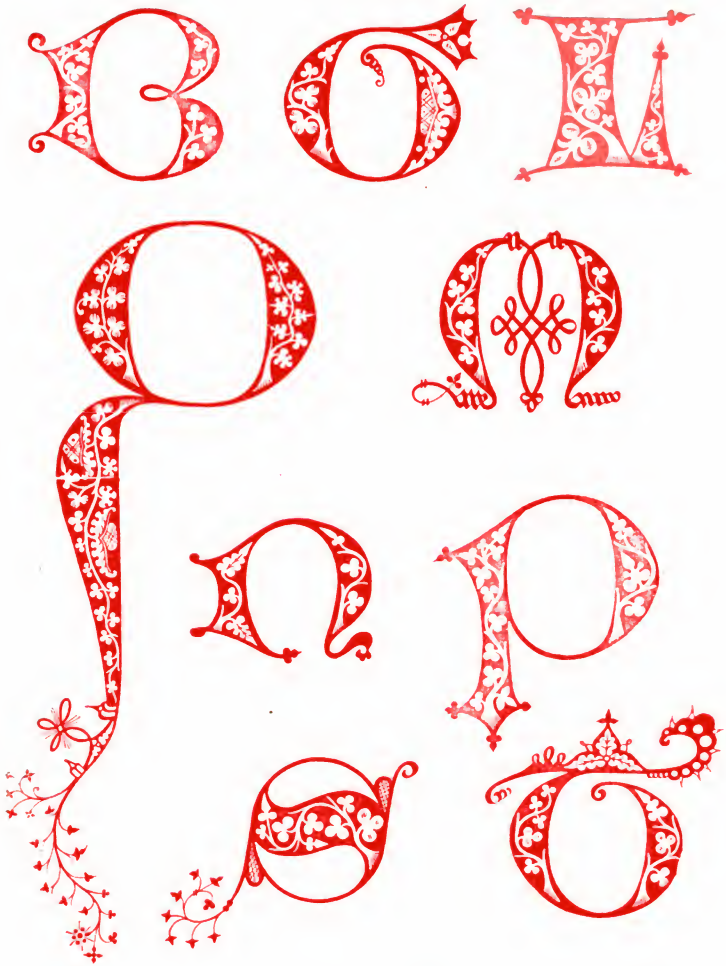
Date about 1475.



FROM SUMMA BARTHOLOMÆI PISANI ORD. PRÆDIC. DE CASIBUS CONSCIENTIÆ.

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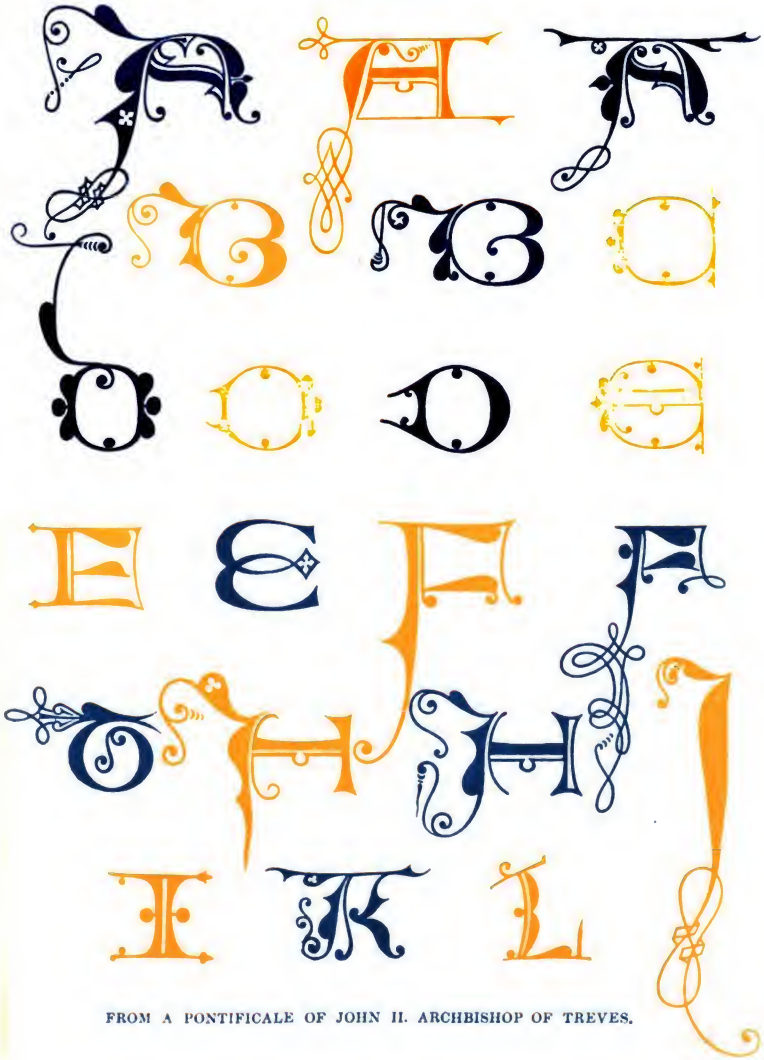
Date, about 1480.



FROM A PONTIFICALE OF JOHN II. ARCHBISHOP OF TREVES.

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Date, about 1480.

FROM A PONTIFICALE OF JOHN II. ARCHBISHOP OF TREVES.

Digitized by Google

Date about 1480.

FROM A MS. AT ROUEN.

Date about 1480.

FROM A BENEDICTIONALE IN THE POSSESSION OF THE REV. W. MASKELL.

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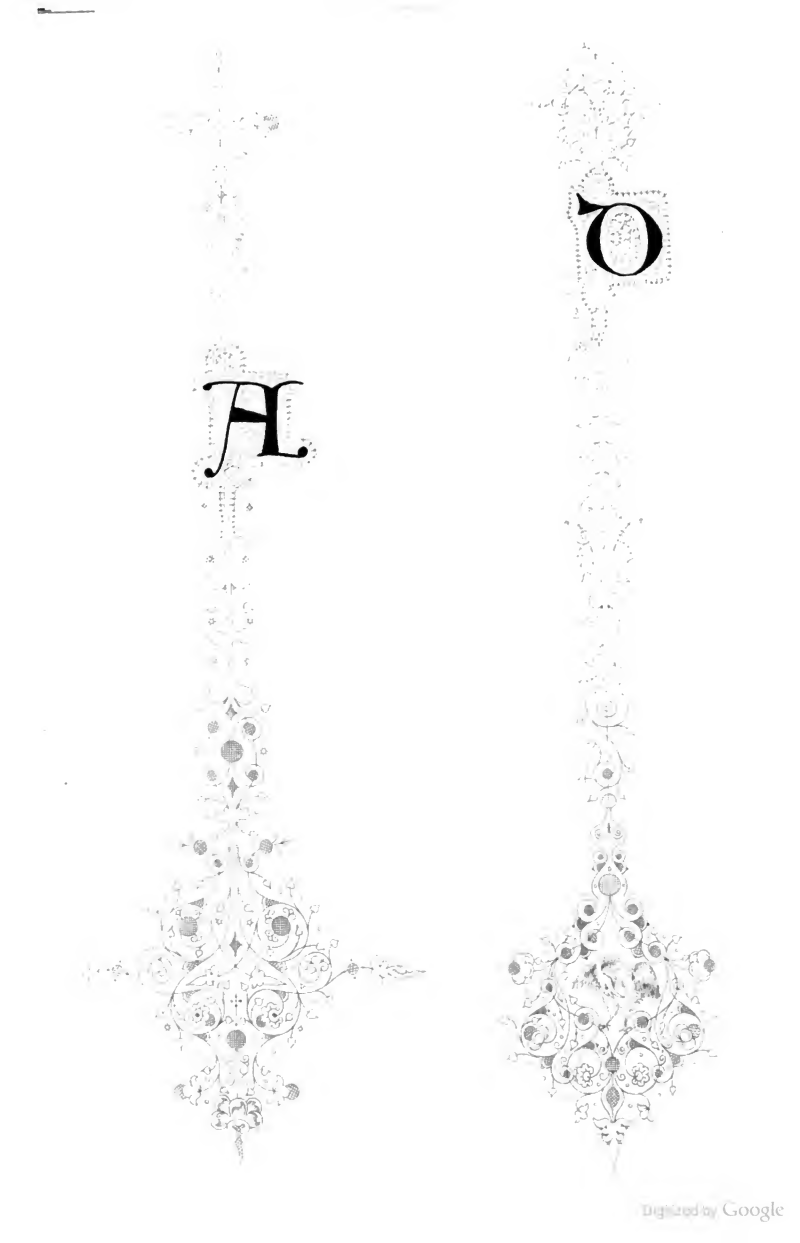

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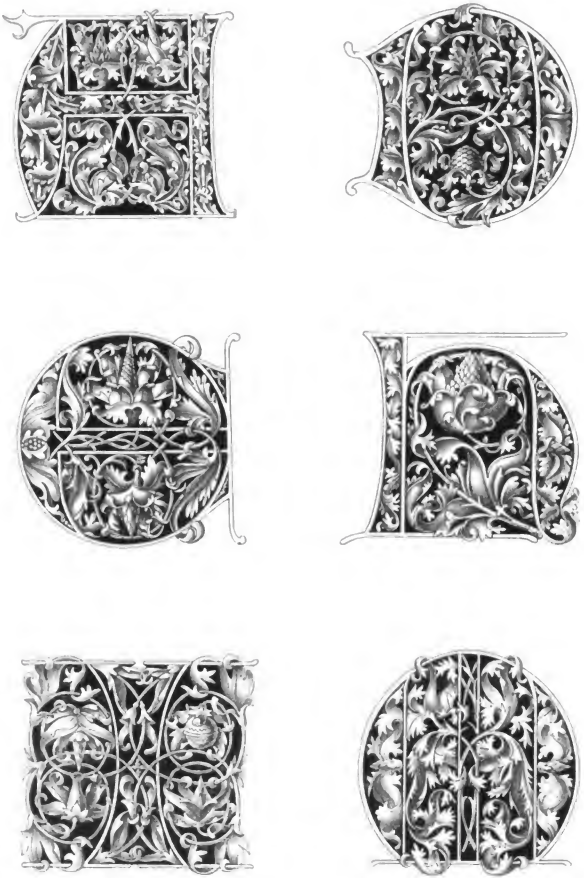
Date 1489.

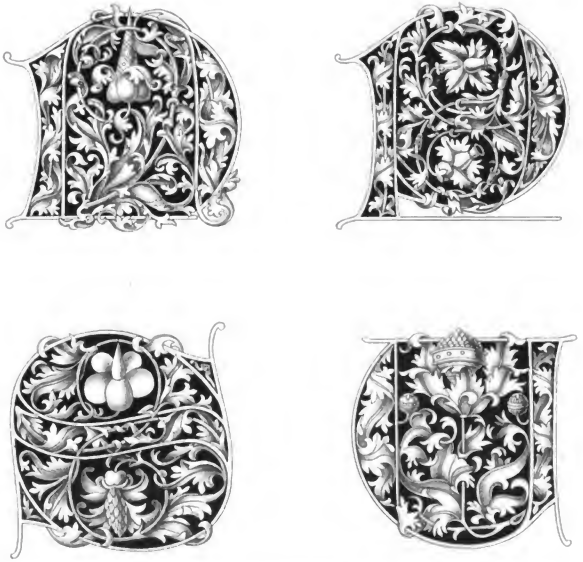


FROM A VOLUME ENTITLED PRESERVATION OF BODY, SOUL, HONOR AND GOODS.

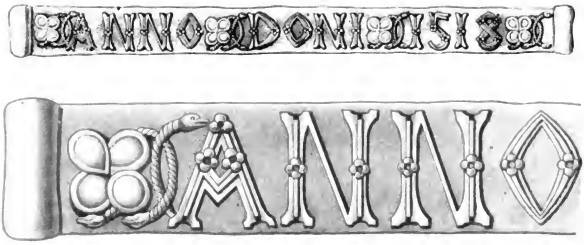
NURENBERGH.

Digitized by Google

Date 1489.



FROM A VOLUME ENTITLED PRESERVATION OF BODY, SOUL, HONOR, AND GOODS.
NURENBERGH.



FROM A GATEWAY IN CHANCERY LANE.

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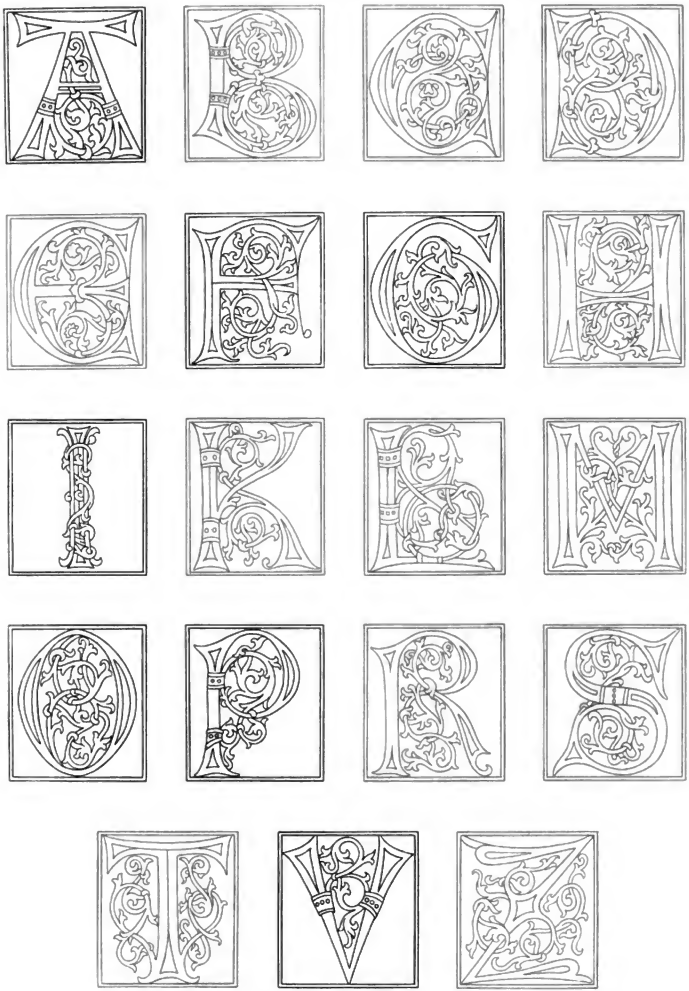

FROM THE GOLDEN BIBLE

Printed at Augsburg

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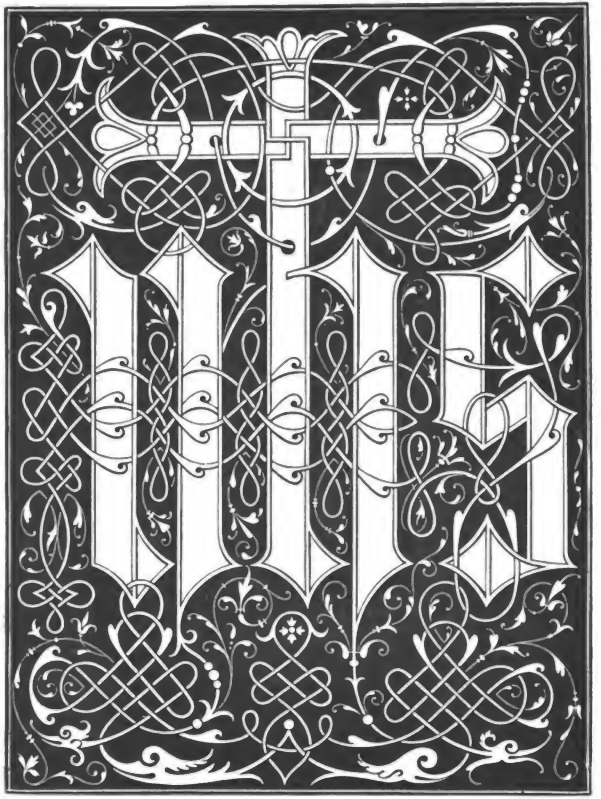
Date, the beginning of the 16th Century.



FROM AN ENGRAVING ON WOOD.

Digitized by Google

DATE THE BEGINNING OF THE 16th CENTURY

From various M.S.S. in the British Museum.

Digitized by Google

Date, the beginning of the 16th Century.

FROM A COPY OF THE ROMANT DE LA ROSE.

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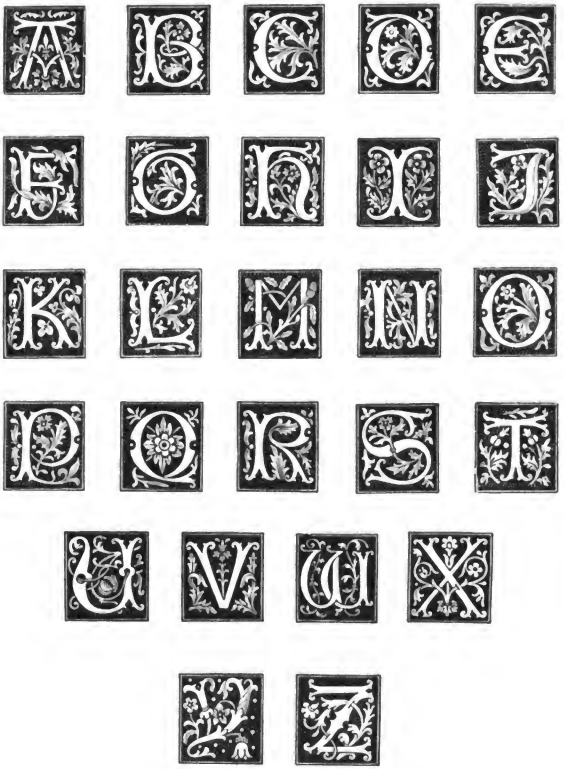
Date, the beginning of the 16th Century.



FROM WOOD CUTS.

Digitized by Google

Date, 1515.

FROM THE MISSALE TRAIJECTENSE.

Digitized by Google

Date, 1515.

FROM THE MISSALE TRAIJECTENSE.

ABCDEFGHI
KLMNOPQRS
TVXYZ.

ABCDEFGHIKLM
NOPQRSTVXYZ

ALPHABETS OF END OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

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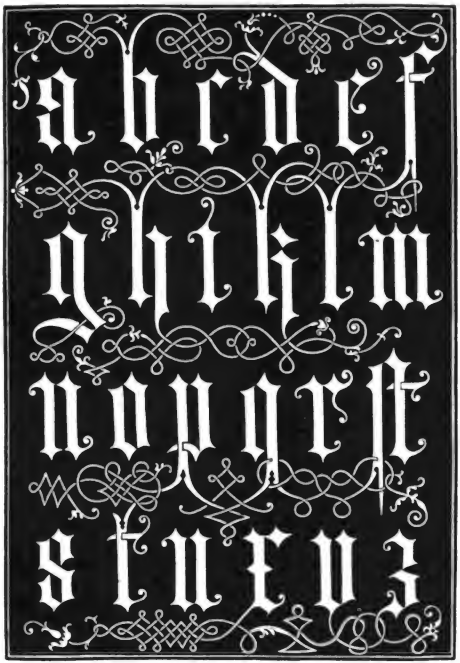
Digitized by Google

Date, the beginning of the 16th Century.



FROM AN ENGRAVING ON WOOD.

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Date 1515.

From Lancelot du Lac.

From Luis de Escobar.
Las Quatro Cientas del Almirante. 1550.

Date 1516.

MISSALE EBORACENSIS ECCLESIÆ.

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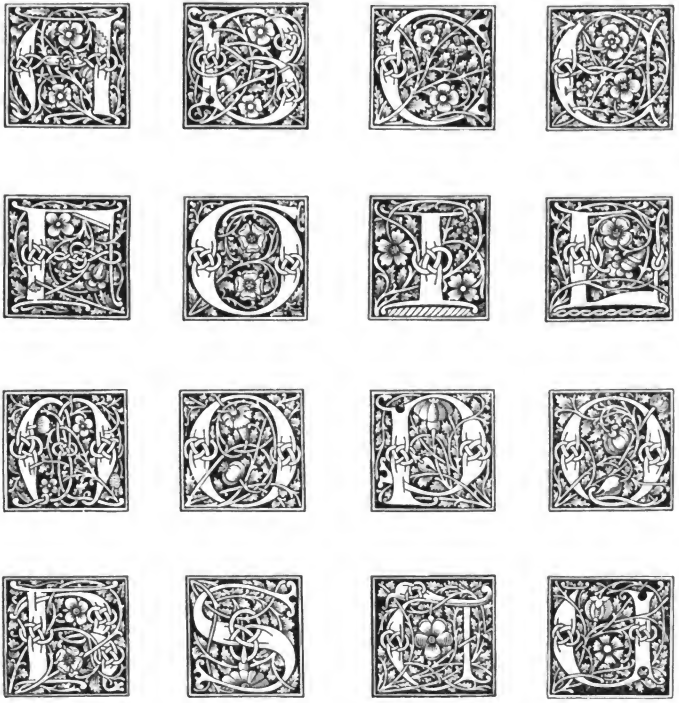
Date, 1530.



FROM THE HYSTOIRE DE PERCEVAL LE GALLOYS.

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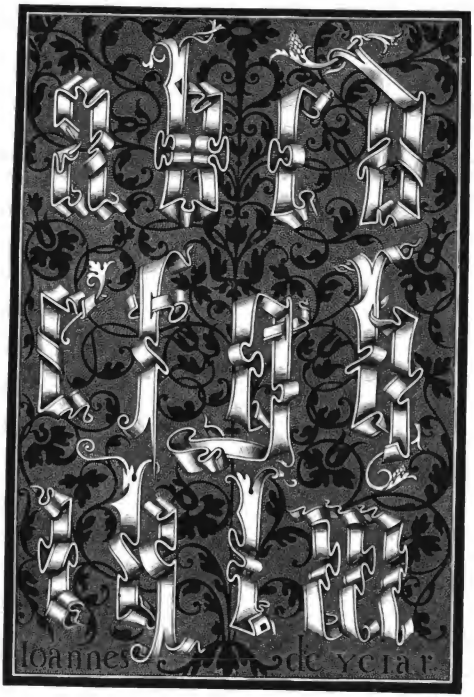
FROM CRANMER'S BIBLE.

Digitized by Google

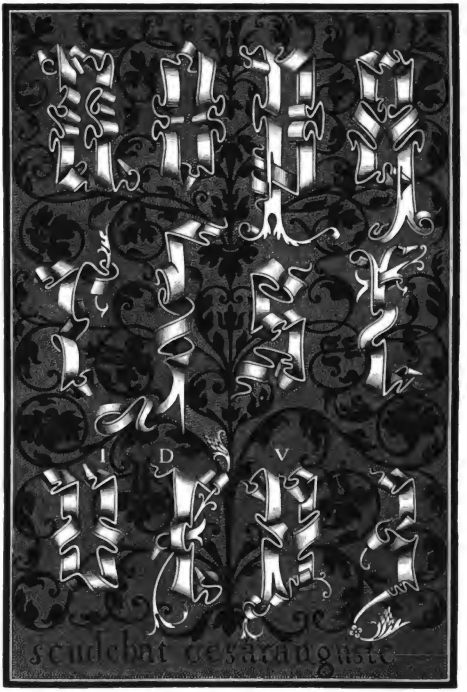
Date, 1547.



RIBAND LETTERS.

Digitized by Google

Date, 1547.



RIBAND LETTERS.

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SACRED MONOGRAM

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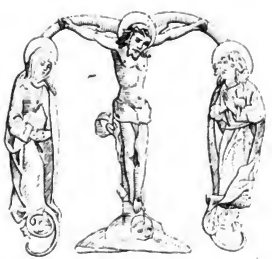
FROM A VOLUME ENTITLED,
FRANCISCI NIGRI DE ARTE SCRIBENDI. DAVENTRIE. 1495.



FROM A PRINTED BOOK

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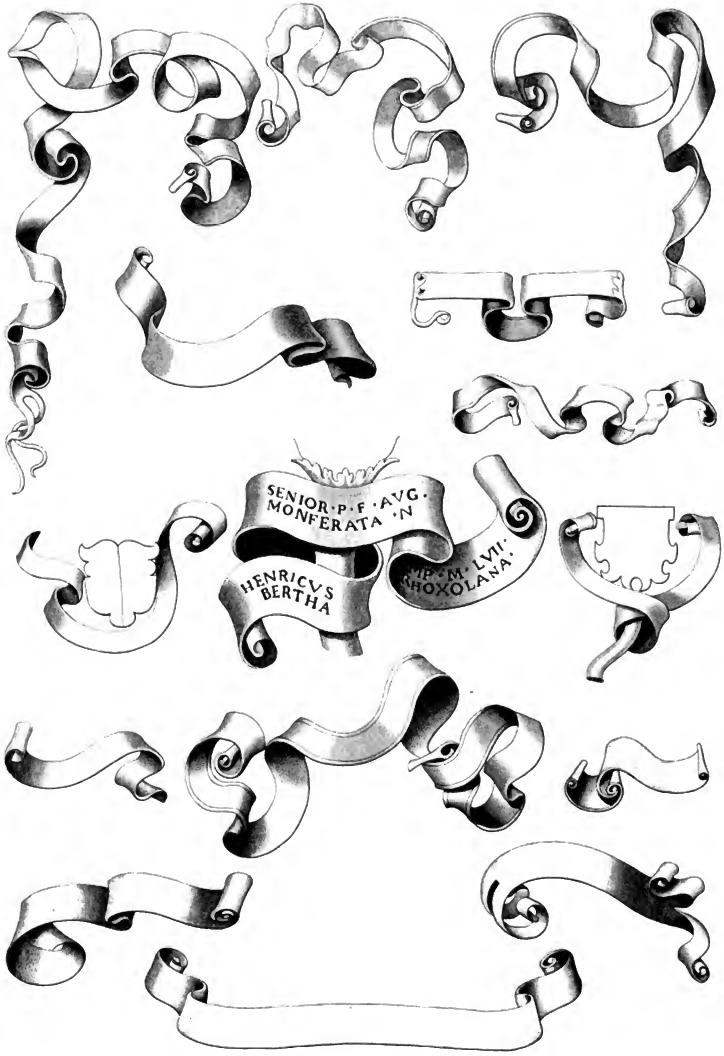

LABELS.

From early German Prints.

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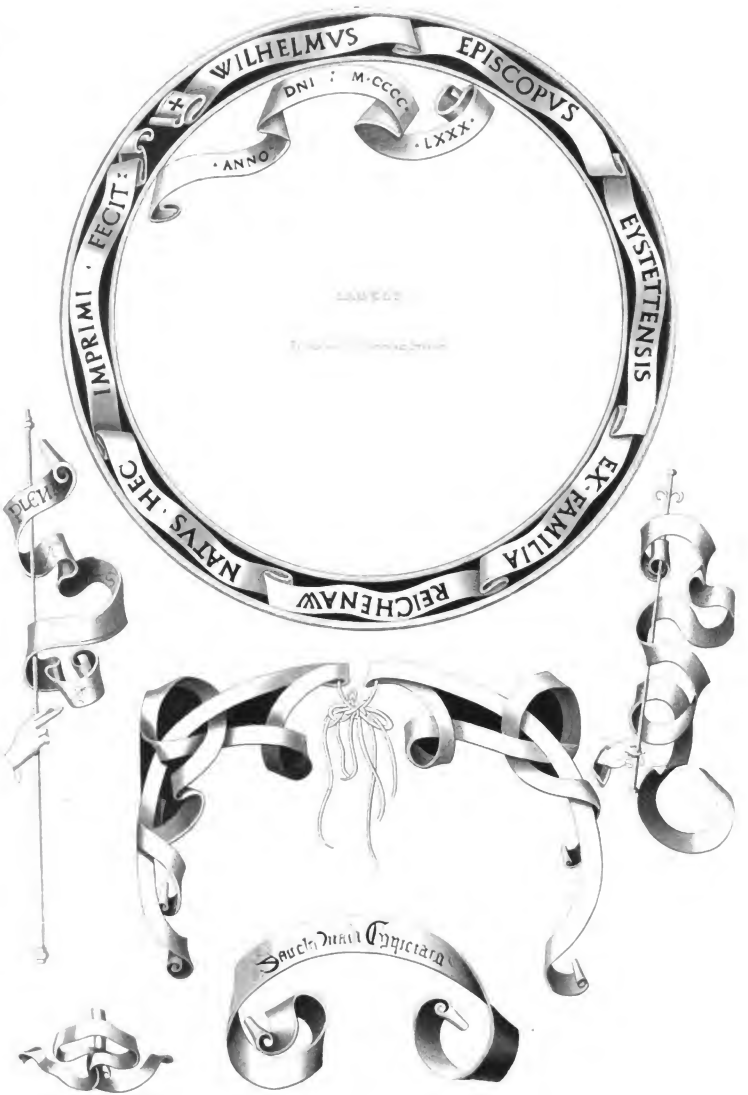
WILHELMVS EPISCOPVS EYSTETTENSIS EX FAMILIA REICHENAW NATVS HEC IMPRIMI FECIT
ANNO DNI M CCCC LXXX
PLENI
Gaudeamus Cypriani

Digitized by Google

DATE ABOUT 1480

A B C D E F G H

I L M N O P Q R

S T U Y

From a M S in the possession of Philip Hanrett Esq^re

Brit Mus^m Vespasian A II
Date 15^th Cent^y

a b c d e f g h i k l

m y o p q R s t o x y

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Brit Mus^m Lansdown M S 451
Date about 1470.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 0

Brit Mus^m Arundel 343
Date 14^th Cent^y

Semitic	Latin	Ebdomade Anat us ad mcclii								
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e	c		h	p	b	ı	q	ı	ı	e
3	d	b	ı	q	ſ	k		3	3	3
ı	e	c	k	r	d	l		e	ı	ı
ı	f	d	l	ſ	f	m		4	ı	ı
Λ	g	e	m	t	g	n		6		
Ebdomade apertewike ad ebdōn dm		19	18	17	16	15	14			
Ebdomade apertewike ad festu Johis		5	4	3	2	1				

From a M S 15th Century.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0.

In the Church of S^t Egide Nuremberg
1457 1468 1515

1457, 1468, 1515

From Salisbury Cathedral.

AD 1554

In Iron on a House near Aix la Chapelle.

1617

A la Cour Imperial Ostend

1673

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